

Boating & Fishing



STATE SENATOR 11th District

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Dear Friend:

With more than 11,000 inland lakes, thousands of miles of rivers and streams, and shoreline on four of the five Great Lakes, there's no better place to spend a Michigan summer than on the water! Fun and adventure are close at hand - whether you love to boat, fish, sail, canoe, kayak, waterski or watch nature.

Before you and your family head to the shore, I wanted to send along some information of interest to boaters and anglers. Along with a legislative report, this newsletter provides safety tips and a resource guide. I hope you find it useful.

Boating and fishing are not only great ways to explore natural Michigan, these activities pump billions of dollars into our state. So enjoy a great summer adventure while you help spark the local economy!

Whether you're sailing the Great Lakes or wading in a cold stream, I hope you and your family have a safe summer.

Sincerely,

State Senator Jack Brandenburg



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BOATERS AND ANGLERS CAN HELP CONTROL ANS

Aquatic nuisance species (ANS) are the number one threat facing Michigan waters.

While our recent efforts have been focused on keeping the destructive Asian carp out of the Great Lakes, more than 180 non-native pests have already invaded our waters. These pests endanger native fish and plant populations, and harm water quality and recreation like boating and fishing.

Boaters and anglers can help prevent further spread of aquatic nuisance species by taking these precautions:

- Thoroughly clean boats, trailers, nets and other equipment with a bleach solution.
- After cleaning, allow boats and equipment to dry in the sun for 4 to 6 hours.
- Do not release live bait into any water body.
- Do not move fish from one body of water to another.



GOING FISHING? THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

Smartphone users can buy a 24-hour Michigan fishing license anywhere, anytime.

Anglers can purchase the 24-hour, all species fishing license with a credit or debit card for \$7 (\$3 for seniors age 65 and older) at <http://mobile.mi.gov/fish>.

Anglers choose the date and time, enter their Michigan driver's license or state ID number, make a payment and receive a confirmation number. For those "dialing in" from the great outdoors, there's no need to print anything or even remember the confirmation number!

Out-of-state anglers and those buying other licenses still need to visit a local retailer or buy the license online at www.mdnr-elicense.com.



MAJOR REGULATION CHANGE UNDER PUBLIC ACT 30 OF 2010

Planning a long weekend fishing trip? New fish possession limits now in effect under legislation signed into law last year allow anglers to keep more fish.

As of April 1: *In addition to one (1) day's daily possession limit of fish, a person may possess an additional two (2) daily possession limits of fish taken during previous fishing days provided that the additional limits of fish are processed (canned, cured by smoking or drying, or frozen). This provision does not apply to lake sturgeon...*

Keep up with other major regulation changes, along with rules and regulations in the **2011 Michigan Fishing Guide**. Access it at www.michigan.gov/dnr. Click Fishing on the left sidebar.



BRANDENBURG REMINDS ANGLERS ABOUT FREE FISHING WEEKEND

Mark your calendar! Michigan's Free Fishing Weekend provides a great opportunity to set aside time to relax with family and friends and enjoy the bounty of Michigan's waters. **The event runs from June 11-12.**

All fishing license fees will be waived on these two days. Residents and out-of-state visitors can enjoy fishing on both inland and Great Lakes waters. All fishing regulations still apply.



BOATING AND ALCOHOL DON'T MIX

You wouldn't get behind the wheel of a car when drinking – why take a chance on the water?

Many boaters don't realize that the use of alcohol can be even more hazardous on water than land. The sun, wind and motion can magnify the effects of alcohol. And keep in mind, boats and personal watercraft can be trickier to handle when stopping and turning, making even minimal alcohol consumption a concern.

The misuse of alcohol is not only dangerous, it's illegal. Michigan law prohibits anyone from boating while under the influence of alcohol or drugs and provides stiff penalties. Under the influence is defined as a BAC of .10 percent; operating impaired as .07 to .09 percent; however, legislation has been introduced to lower the BAC limit to the same level as drunk driving.

Alcohol use is the leading contributing factor in fatal boating accidents. Let's make this boating season safe and sober!

It's the law! By virtue of operating a boat on Michigan waters, boaters have consented to be tested for alcohol or drugs if arrested.



SAFE BOATING THE BASICS



- 1. Wear Your Life Jacket. Always.** There were 36 boating fatalities in 2008, including 28 people who drowned. Only two of those boaters were wearing life jackets. The number one way to stay safe on the water is to wear a life jacket.
- 2. Stay Sober.** It is illegal to operate a boat or personal watercraft under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Alcohol is a factor in 20 percent of all recreational boating fatalities.
- 3. Maintain a Safe Speed and Stay Alert.** Most boating accidents are caused by operator errors. Be ready for other boats, swimmers, skiers or shallow waters.
- 4. Take a Boating Safety Course.** Know the rules and always boat with safety in mind.
- 5. Keep Your Boat in Safe Working Order.** Make sure your craft meets state and federal requirements and is properly equipped. Request a Vessel Safety Check at www.vesselsafetycheck.org.
- 6. File a Float Plan.** Let someone on shore know where you're going and when you plan to return.

Check the Handbook of Michigan Boating Laws and Responsibilities to stay on top of Michigan boating rules and regulations. Access it at www.boat-ed.com/mi/handbook/.



SENATE BILL WOULD MAKE BOATING MORE AFFORDABLE

That new boat could be more affordable if legislation before the Senate is signed into law.

Under Senate Bills 126 and 127, the six percent sales tax would be applied only to the difference between the price of a new or used boat or car, and the value of a trade-in. Currently, a buyer pays sales tax on the full sales price, period.

The "sales tax on the difference" reform could mean savings for consumers of hundreds to thousands of dollars, and that's good news for any boater considering a new purchase.



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FISH KILL OFTEN CAUSED BY WEATHER

A massive fish kill can be an alarming sight. Reports over the last few years of virus-related fish kills in Michigan waters have caused some concern.

But according to the DNR, it is not uncommon to see dead or dying fish in ponds and lakes during the early spring and summer months. Winter kill is the most common type of fish kill and caused by low oxygen levels, often due to heavy snow and ice cover. Low oxygen levels during hot summer weather can also cause a fish die off.

While most natural fish kills are due to the weather, remember to follow all DNR bait rules to keep the spread of VHS and other fish diseases at bay.

If you suspect a fish kill may be due to something other than natural causes, please call the Pollution Emergency Alert System at (800) 292-4706 or report the incident at **DNR-FISH-Report-Fish-Kills@michigan.gov**.

RESOURCES

BOATING

Handbook of Michigan Boating Laws:
www.boat-ed.com/mi/handbook

Harbor and Campground Reservations:
1-800-447-2757 or www.midnrreservations.com

Boating Access Sites:
www.mcgi.state.mi.us/MRBIS

Boating Safety Classes:
www.dnr.state.mi.us/recnsearch

NOAA Marine Forecasts and Weather Information
www.crh.noaa.gov/grr/marine

U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety:
www.uscgboating.org

FISHING

2011 Michigan Fishing Guide:
www.michigan.gov/dnr

DNR Fisheries Division
517-373-1280

Weekly Fishing Report:
517-373-0908

Michigan Master Angler State Records:
www.michigandnr.com/MASTERANGLER

**DO NOT MOVE FISH OR WATER FROM
ONE BODY OF WATER TO ANOTHER.**